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Thesis

[~~A STUDY OF~~] CERTAIN REALISTIC NOVELS OF DANIEL DEFOE AND ARNOLD BENNETT

by

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I

Introduction

Two great realists have been chosen for this study, one representative of the eighteenth century and the other of the twentieth. Daniel Defoe is an important figure in the early development of the realistic novel and Bennett is well-known as a contemporary realist. By study of Robinson Crusoe, Moll Flanders, Roxana, Captain Singleton, and Colonel Jacque of Defoe's narratives and The Old Wives' Tale and The Clayhanger Trilogy of Bennett's novels, it is here intended to show the effect of the authors' lives upon their styles, the influence of literature and philosophy upon their novels, and the individuality of Defoe's and Bennett's realism.

Since Bennett is a contemporary novelist, the amount of pertinent literature is limited. For this reason the section on Bennett is written at a disadvantage. This thesis was not undertaken as a comparison of Bennett and Defoe, but as a study of two novelists representative of early and contemporary realism.

II

Defoe

A. The Effect of Defoe's Life on his style

In the late Seventeenth and the early Eighteenth centuries lived Daniel Defoe. This period is characterized by active political and religious life. The Whigs were of the merchant class and their opponents, the Tories, were landowners. In general the Whigs aligned themselves with the Anglican Low church members and the Nonconformists; the Tories were in sympathy with the Anglican High church. The followers of the Pretender, James III, possessed Catholic leanings and formed a third group that usually joined the Tory party. It is not strange that Defoe, living in that age, was a politician and a moralist.

Defoe, in the earlier part of his life, was the business man who was interested in political affairs. During the reign of Queen Anne his political interests were more prominent than his commercial enterprises.

Still later in life he placed before business and politics his writing.

In Defoe's novels a deep understanding of middle-class life is shown, first, by the point of view of the tradesman who measures success by material gain, and, secondly, by the rigid sense of right and wrong of the Puritan. Undoubtedly, Defoe's able portrayal of the middle class can be attributed to his environment.

In the parish of St. Giles-in-Cripplegate, just outside the walls of London, about the year 1660, Daniel Defoe was born. His father, James Foe, was a tallow-chandler. After two catastrophes, the Great Plague of 1665 and the Great Fire of 1666, had spared the Foe family, Defoe's father was able to establish himself as a butcher, a tradesman considered, at that time, very respectable and solid. At an early age Defoe, a visitor in his father's Fore Street shop, probably felt the importance of the tradesman and the pleasurable deference of clerks to the merchant's son.

Since the Foe family had been spared from the public disasters, James Foe was convinced that Providence was responsible for his good fortune. He was a conscientious religious instructor to his

children. He placed Daniel under the tutelage of the Reverend Annesley, a Dissenting minister. Daniel's father, urged on by the Reverend Annesley, decided that his son should be a minister.

Accordingly Daniel entered a Nonconformist school at Newington Green, where young Dissenters were studying for the ministry. Charles Morton, the director of the school, placed emphasis upon practical rather than classical subjects. The study of such subjects as French, Dutch, Spanish, and Italian, history, science, astronomy, and particularly geography shows in Defoe's writings. From The Life and Pyracies of Captain Singleton, the following quotation demonstrates Defoe's remarkable knowledge[1] of geography. "We saw lions, and tigers, and leopards, every night and morning in abundance; but, as they seldom came near us, we let them go about their business; if they offered to come near us, we made false fire with any gun that was uncharged, and they would walk off as soon as they saw the flash... We began to meet with elephants in great numbers; those creatures delighted chiefly in the woody part of the country...Our surgeon persuaded me to be bled during the time of rest, which contributed much to my

1. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 236

continued health...in so hot a climate... We were gotten too much in the middle of the country and among the deserts: whereas the inhabitants are principally found among the rivers, lakes, and lowlands..."[1] Defoe commented on the natural resources of Africa, its "elephant teeth" or ivory and its gold-bearing rivers.

Although Charles Morton conducted a broad, practical plan of study, he never forgot to place emphasis on the moral point of view in all his lectures. Defoe's experience in this school deepened the moral training of his home life. Defoe wrote his narratives from the point of view of the moralist. The importance of religion in the life of man is exemplified in his novels. As a child the Nonconformist sermons and ideals impressed him. His education at Newington was for the purpose of training him for the dissenting ministry. Since Defoe had a naturally receptive mind, he became impregnated with the religious concepts to which he was subjected.

Robinson Crusoe's first thought as he managed to get beyond reach of the waves was, "I was now landed, and safe on shore, and began to look up and thank

1. Defoe: Captain Singleton p. 140

God that my life was saved..."[1] However it was not until illness overtook him that Crusoe resorted to prayer. The miseries of unattended illness cause him to remember his father's counsel on the justice of God. He ends his repentant soliloquy by "Lord, be my help, for I am in great distress".[2] He recovers from the attack of ague, and for the first time in his life asks God's blessing on his supper. Crusoe's meditation on God's omnipotency lasts for a few days. He learns to pray sincerely; he reads the Bible; in short, he undergoes a spiritual awakening.

The Puritan belief that there is no rightful feeling of pleasure in reading fiction pervades Defoe's novels. He often goes out of his way to justify his writings by stressing the moral values and by proclaiming the truth of his material. He depicts the wicked side of life but ends the story with the reformation of the sinners and the downfall of the villainous. Robinson Crusoe is a fine example of the moralizing influence on Defoe's works. Although there is constant reference to the divine will of Providence in Robinson Crusoe and in The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, Defoe thought it advisable to follow these adventures

1. Maynadier: Robinson Crusoe Vol. 1 p. 50
2. Maynadier: Robinson Crusoe Vol. 1 p. 101

with the Serious Reflections, the third volume of the Crusoe narratives. Defoe apparently believed that, "the fable is always made for the moral, not the moral for the fable".[1]

It matters not of what class of society Defoe writes, for his moral views are rigid. In Defoe's novels of low life, the rewards of right and wrong doing are justly meted out. The only possible hope of the sinner for comfort and peace is sincere repentance. In Roxana, a fine romance of the upper class, the heroine's eventual downfall from affluence to poverty is very effective. Amid ill-gotten riches and position, the conscience of Roxana is the moral voice of the story. Since happiness cannot be built on sin, Roxana, impoverished and practically friendless, ends her days in prison. The dangerous results of avarice and vanity are Roxana's portion. As a true moralist, Defoe makes no class distinctions in the wages of vice.

Although Defoe did not become a minister, he gained a broad education, linguistic background, and training in writing. The family life and perhaps the education of Defoe were similar to those of the educated

1. Defoe: Serious Reflections Preface p. 9

New Englander of his day. In fact, Defoe has been called "the Yankee Trader of the Queen Anne Writers".[1]

At an early period, Defoe's interest was in business rather than in the ministry. He left the school at Newington to work for a hosedealer on Cornhill. His superior education and his natural aptitude for business earned for him a more responsible position than was open to the average apprentice. It is probable that, at the close of his period of apprenticeship, he became a traveling merchant who served as middle-man between the importer and the shopkeeper. He spent the next two years on the continent. Although Defoe's traveling was for business and not for pleasure, the wealth of detail concerning foreign lands gained from the journeys is apparent in his narratives. How well he portrayed the first sea trip of young Robinson Crusoe! Crusoe, against the wishes of his parents, took a voyage from Hull to London and described it in the following words, --- "I was most inexpressibly sick in body, and terrified in my mind... I expected every wave would have swallowed us up, and that every time the ship fell down, as I thought, in the trough or

1. Maynadier: Introduction to Defoe's Work p. 10

hollow of the sea, we should never rise more; and in this agony of mind I made many vows and resolutions, that if it would please God here to spare my life this one voyage, if ever I got my foot upon dry land again, I would go directly home to my father, and never set it into a ship again while I lived".[1] Clearly, Defoe's own voyages had not proved all smooth sailing.

About the year 1683 Defoe was established in business on Cornhill. He traded in hosiery, but was on the watch for any profitable business deal. For some seven years he lived the life of a successful business man who is interested in political affairs. At the end of this period his carefully amassed fortune was dissipated by unfortunate speculations. To avoid imprisonment for debts, he went into retirement for some months. His creditors eventually decided not to press their charges against Defoe who promised to fulfil his obligations to them. In his Compleat English Tradesman Defoe says, "The English Tradesman, though unfortunate, is a kind of phoenix, a phoenix, who rises out of his own ashes".[2] This statement Defoe applied to his own business failure.

1. Maynadier: Robinson Crusoe p. 7
2. Dottin: Strange and Surprising Adventures of Daniel Defoe p. 56

For the last four years of the Seventeenth century, he held the position of Accountant to the Commissioners for the Glass Duty, a reward for writing political pamphlets in support of the government. The remuneration that he received from this office enabled him to set up a tile factory at Tilbury. He once more operated a successful business which now made it possible for him to honorably discharge his debts. However, there was a period of irregular living that would indicate that Defoe had forgotten his moral precepts. He repented of his sin and "his humility quieted his conscience so that he was able to answer the Presbyterian minister, Mr. Howe's reproaches concerning his misconduct by the pious assumption that, since God had repaired his material fortune, He must certainly have forgiven his follies and indiscretions".[1] This illustrates Defoe's commercial view point on life and shows his interpretation of spiritual welfare from material conditions.

It is inevitable that Defoe, born in the tradesman class, who had conducted business enterprises himself and suffered financial reverses, should always visualize the middle-class and low-life character in

1. Dottin: Strange and Surprising Adventure of Daniel Defoe p. 71

pursuit of material gain. Robinson Crusoe shows the effect of the shrewd and practical mind of Defoe, the business man. The reader is always informed regarding the financial state of the hero. His trading experiences are given with the amounts of investment and return. The disposition of Crusoe's income is related. One half he reinvests in trade goods for 'Guinea'; the remainder is left in the care of a friend. Upon his return from the island, a detailed account is given of the Brazilian plantation which he had left many years before. The yearly produce and the money income, which had been in charge of various people, are listed. Crusoe shows, through the wealth of commercial detail, Defoe's tradesman attitude. Again in Moll Flanders, from the beginning of her story to the end, the financial circumstances are exactly kept. Moll continually takes stock of her resources. Whenever she steals, a detailed list of the booty is made. At the end of her history, repenting past evils and determined on an honest future, Moll once again inventories her considerable wealth as follows: "there's 246 pounds in money at first, then two gold watches, diamond rings, and plate... Here's a plantation on

York River, 100 pounds a year, then 150 pounds in money, then a sloop load of horses, cow, hogs, and stores; and now a cargo cost 250 pounds in England, and worth here twice the money". In all his narrative writing Defoe shows the influence of his commercial background and experience.

While Defoe's attention was in the main devoted to his business career, he had a definite interest in politics. Eventually, when political writing became his business, he received training that is shown in his novels. In 1700 Defoe published his satire, The True Born Englishman. This was an answer to a pamphlet which accused the Dutch William III of England of having Dutch interests at heart rather than English. The True Born Englishman, which satirized the hybrid English race, was popular with the people and placed Defoe among the friends of King William III. Defoe enjoyed his most prosperous days until after the death of William when there was a Tory reaction and a general feeling against Dissenters. Defoe came to the support of the latter with The Shortest Way with the Dissenters, a work so ironical that its intent was mistaken by both sides. The high churchmen praised it; Defoe's

friends resented it. Its author finally wrote an explanation of its true meaning, whereupon the indignant Tories sentenced Defoe, as a writer of sedition, with a fine, the pillory, and prison.

Defoe did everything possible to avoid punishment, but he was finally brought to Newgate Prison. Here he found colorful material which was to be used later in his narratives. Highwaymen, cutpurses, women of the streets could be studied at close quarters and his genius did not fail to abstract first hand information on criminal life and development. When the time came for his public punishment in the pillory, Defoe cleverly turned this humiliation into a triumph. In preparation for the event, he had written The Hymn to the Pillory, copies of which were circulated among those who attended his public exhibition. The sympathetic crowd presented fruits and flowers to him as he stood in the garland-hung pillory. By his ingenious Hymn to the Pillory Defoe had avoided the usual treatment of pillory prisoners, which included a pelting with all kinds of offensive material. His training in writing pamphlets gave Defoe an understanding of the English middle class. "He knew how

to present his material in such a fashion as to convince those who were inclined to be prejudiced against him".[1] It is natural that his narratives should be realistic and convincing since his political business was to write to convince the reader.

After five months' imprisonment Defoe was freed at the instigation of Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, who was a power in English politics. Harley appreciated the worth of the able pamphleteer. Defoe, his tile business ruined by his imprisonment, accepted the patronage of Harley and became his political tool from now on. The following incident that occurred years later demonstrates the important influence of his political writing on his narratives. Harley was on trial, charged with Jacobitism. Defoe planned to startle the political world with evidence favorable to Harley. Shortly before the trial the Memoirs of the French ambassador, Mesnager, appeared, relating the negotiations that came before the peace of Utrecht. This work that represented Harley as a champion of Protestantism "was quite the most provocative of all the hoaxes Defoe was guilty of".[2] His political pamphlets called for the convincing fiction

1. Dottin: Strange and Surprising Adventures of Daniel Defoe p. 121
2. Dottin: Strange and Surprising Adventures of Daniel Defoe p. 187

that is found in his novels.

He used the Quaker's manner of speech in his pamphlets. In one directed to Henry Sacheverell, a "high-flyer", Defoe addressed him in the following words, -- "Verily, Henry...thinkest thou that the Man George, whom the Lord hath delighted in, and hath chosen to exalt, and who the princes and great men of the Land have placed upon the throne, even as the Lord hath commanded, thinkest thou, I say, that he can ever be prevail'd with to receive into his bosom any of those thy people who are called Tories?"[1] At a later period when Defoe wrote his account of The Life of Roxana, he used the character and speech of the Quaker, Roxana, who had gone into hiding in the home of a Quaker woman, had the following conversation that shows Defoe's ability, developed by pamphleteering, in writing in the Quaker manner. "'It is easy to suppose that thou art a little concerned at somewhat those men say; I suppose they are talking of thee'. 'Indeed, my good friend,' said I, 'thou art mistaken this time for I know very well what they are talking of, 'tis all about ships and trading affairs'. 'Well', says she, 'then one of them is a

1. Dottin: Strange and Surprising Adventures of Daniel Defoe p. 187

man friend of thine, or somewhat is the case, for though thy tongue will not confess it, thy face does'".[1] In his political writing Defoe gained experience in putting himself in the places of various characters, an experience that later shows itself in his narratives.

In the year 1719, Defoe brought forth The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner. From this time on he devoted himself to the writing of novels. Defoe, the gifted realist of the early Eighteenth century died in April 1731.

The life of Defoe shows several definite influences on his narratives. The fact that he lived in a period of religious and political activity and a period of interest in tales of travel and adventure is significant. As a result of his environment he saw the world from an economic point of view. Defoe's family life and education made him a Puritan, but nature made him a tradesman. He measured everything on a material scale. Political writing proved to be excellent training for the now famous realist. Robinson Crusoe, Captain Singleton, Colonel Jacque, Moll Flanders, and

1. Defoe: Life of Roxana p. 44

Roxana, show the vicissitudes of life from Defoe's commercial standpoint that is colored by moralization. The effectiveness and the convincing reality of these works are the result of the author's invaluable political experience. The life of Defoe as the boy Puritan, as the practical business man, and as the gifted political writer made possible his fine narratives.

B. His Use of Source Material

Defoe's natural endowments and his life's training fitted him for the writing of novels. In presenting fiction in the guise of fact Defoe found it necessary to turn to the literature of travels, voyages, and supposedly true adventures. The general and specific influences of certain accounts of this type on Robinson Crusoe are herein set forth mainly as shown in the Studies in the Narrative Method of Defoe, a thorough work by Arthur Wellesley Secord.

Mention should be made of certain source and authorship theories for Robinson Crusoe, that, at one time or another, have been popular. "Robinson Crusoe, like many other books of popular interest, has given rise to a number of problems. Among the less important of these are the questions of authorship; and of time and place of compositions. ...Especially prolific have been speculations and surmises about the materials that form the groundwork of the story, and concerning Defoe's use of those materials".[1] The Gentleman's Magazine for March 1788 has an anonymous communication declaring that the celebrated romance, Robinson Crusoe

1. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 22

was written by Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, while imprisoned in the Tower of London. The name of the Reverend Benjamin Holloway is mentioned as a source for the statement. Earlier evidence in the form of a letter written in 1774 is cited through the medium of Lee's Life and Newly Discovered Writings of Defoe. The following quotation from Lee (who does not credit the theory) gives the details of the story. "The respect due to everything sanctioned by so great an authority as Sir Henry Ellis, compels me to notice a strange surprising account of the authorship of the first volume of Robinson Crusoe. In 1843 Sir Henry edited, for the Camden Society, a handsome quarto volume, entitled Original Letters of Eminent Literary Men. At page 320 is a letter by T. Warton dated 1774, stating that the Reverend Benjamin Holloway told him that Lord Sunderland told him that the first volume of Robinson Crusoe was written by Lord Oxford while a prisoner in the Tower, 'as an amusement under confinement', and was given to Defoe who frequently visited him there; and, that Defoe printed it as his own, with his lordship's approbation, and added a second volume 'the inferiority of which is generally acknowledged'".[1]

1. Lee: Life and Newly Discovered Writings of Defoe Vol. 1 p. 294

John E. Roe advances the theory that "The matchless story entitled Robinson Crusoe"[1] is the product of the mind of Lord Bacon. He bases his claim on the similarity of Crusoe to Bacon's New Atlantis in regard to general framework of the sentences, peculiar Baconian use of certain words and set forms of expression, and general narrational style.

As a development of study of the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy, Roe came to the conclusion that not only were the Tempest (attributed to Shakespeare) and the New Atlantis (Bacon) products of Bacon, but also Defoe's Robinson Crusoe had its origin in the same mind.

Roe believes that Defoe's Crusoe and subsequent similar works falsely give the credit for the beginning of the English Novel to Defoe. Roe intends to prove that Lord Bacon was not merely the author of Crusoe "but that he was the author of nearly all of the so-called Defoe literature".[2]

Another theory championed within recent years is Defoe's indebtedness to The Mighty Kingdom of Krinke Kesmes. This work, entitled Sjouke Gabbes or The Dutch Source for Robinson Crusoe was translated in 1921 by Lucius L. Hubbard. The original story Krinke Kesmes

1. Roe: Mortal Moon p. 18

2. Roe: Mortal Moon p. 18

by Hendrik Smeeks, 1708, contains many strikingly similar incidents and descriptive details that are to be found in Robinson Crusoe which was published some eleven years later. Krinke Kesmes is a South Sea island where Juan de Posas, the narrator of the tale, is taken captive by natives. Posas was well treated by the inhabitants of the isle who eventually permitted him to depart. In the meantime he utilizes his stay by study of the people. He meets a Dutchman called El-Ho or Freeman who gives Posas a written account of his arrival on Krinke Kesmes and his years of solitary life in the wilderness. It is this episode from which, as Hubbard claims, Defoe derived much of his Crusoe material.

El-Ho relates his wandering from the reconnoitering crew of his ship, his subsequent deserted state with its horrid first years. However El-Ho finds contentment through incessant manual labor. This Dutch narrative not only parallels the later Robinson Crusoe in its general theme but also offers many identical details, such as the finding of a footprint in the sand, the wall-surrounded hut entered by means of a ladder, and the discovery of supplies on three occasions.

The comparison of excerpts from the Dutch trans-

lation, Sjouke Gabbes, with Robinson Crusoe is plausible proof for Hubbard's statement, "There can be no reasonable doubt that Defoe knew this book, and perhaps little, that he had it by him when he wrote parts of his Robinson."[1] Perhaps the following quotation from Lee on Defoe's linguistic abilities offers substantiation to Hubbard's theory. "As to the scholastic attainments of Defoe we are not left in ignorance. He was able to read the Greek Classics, and had not only mastered the most difficult Latin authors, but himself produced Latin compositions for the press; he translated and spoke Spanish, Italian, and French, the latter fluently, and had some knowledge of Dutch".[2]

Mr. Secord in his consideration of the Dutch Source for Robinson Crusoe says, "that the episode of the El-Ho related by Smeeks has some general and a few specific resemblances to Robinson Crusoe; that it is not at all certain that Defoe either knew or used the Dutch story; and that, if he did so, it was of far less service to him than Mr. Hubbard and others have asserted, since most of the material contained therein was available to Defoe in English works which we are certain that he knew and used".[3]

1. Hubbard: Sjouke Gabbes p. 22
2. Lee: Life and Newly Discovered Writings of Defoe Vol. 1 p. 10
3. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 106

However Professor Trent[1] accepts none of these and other theories as well-founded except the one which credits Defoe with having been inspired by the published accounts of Selkirk's adventure. That Defoe may have heard or read the accounts of other castaways he thinks possible. He concludes, however, by asserting: "all that is certain is that Defoe's book speedily eclipsed whatever predecessors it may have had".[2]

Since a study of Defoe's use of source material is both complicated and difficult, for the purposes of this section a part of Robinson Crusoe has been taken as typical of Defoe's narrative method. The published accounts of Selkirk, Pitman's Relation, Knox's Ceylon, Dampier's Voyages, and Misson's Leguat's Voyage are listed by Mr. Secord as certain sources for the island story in Robinson Crusoe. The influence of the works by Knox, Dampier, and Misson has not been traced before. Just how Selkirk furnished Defoe with the idea of the island story and how Knox, Dampier, and the others furnished the supply of incidents for the narrative is shown by Mr. Secord's study.

As a background for the discussion of Defoe's use of these sources a résumé of Robinson Crusoe through its island portion is given here. Robinson Crusoe

1. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 24
2. Trent, W.P.: Introduction to Robinson Crusoe p. xxv

spent his early years in York, England. His mother's maiden name was Robinson. His father, a foreigner from Bremen, was called Kreutznaer, or by corruption Crusoe. As a boy he had a longing for a seaman's life much to the sorrow of his parents. With a young seafaring companion he sails from Hull on a trip that proves disastrous. The crew is rescued just before the vessel founders. On another voyage he is captured and put into slavery by a Moorish raider. He escapes to Brazil with the aid of a Portuguese ship. As a planter Crusoe becomes successful, but the scarcity of slaves on the neighboring plantations offers an appealing and profitable trip to Africa. Crusoe leaves his plantation to take charge of the voyage. The ship is wrecked on a desert island, and Crusoe alone of the ship's company survives. His equipment consists of a knife, a tobacco pipe, and a bit of tobacco.

A wealth of vivid detail tells his life on the island. He salvages the ship's stores, and very practically sets about caring for his natural needs. For some twenty-eight years he keeps an account of time by notches on a post. He builds two dwelling places. He domesticates wild goats, planted corn, and dried grapes. Turtles, which were plentiful,

formed a part of his diet. He constructs a boat from a cedar log.

Secure in his belief that he is the sole human upon the island, Crusoe is terrified by the sight of a human foot-print in the sand. He discovers that his island is a retreat for cannibalistic orgies. He succeeds in rescuing one of the victims of one of these horrifying celebrations. This cannibal, whom he called Friday, becomes Crusoe's devoted servant and a convert to Christianity.

Upon another occasion, Friday and Crusoe rescue two victims designed for a cannibal feast. One was the father of Friday, the other a Spaniard. These two who were saved are equipped to rescue a colony of Spaniards of which Crusoe's Spanish friend was a member. An English ship's crew attempts to leave its captain and mate on the island. Crusoe's ingenuity foils the mutineers. He returns to England after an absence of thirty-five years.

Selkirk's experience was one of the outstanding events of Defoe's day. Londoners thought of Selkirk when they talked of desert island adventures, for his case was the most recent and widely published. Secord assumes as fundamental that Selkirk furnished Defoe

with the central theme of Robinson Crusoe.[1] The following sketch of the life of Selkirk taken from the published accounts shows the meagerness of incident in comparison to that of Crusoe. Alexander Selcraig, known as Selkirk, was born at Largo, Scotland. He had an early longing for the sea which prevented success in his father's profession of shoemaking. At the age of eighteen, he suddenly left home, and was gone for six years. It is supposed that he was with buccaneers in the South Seas. He returned to Largo where he seemed to be involved in constant trouble with his family. As the sea was his element, he left for London to engage in a South Sea expedition with a Captain Dampier. There was ill feeling between Selkirk and his immediate commander, Stradling, which caused him to quit his ship at the island of Juan Fernandez. Upon this island Selkirk lived for four years and four months, until Captain Woodes Rogers of the ship "Duke" discovered him. Rogers had Selkirk accompany him on the remainder of the expedition in the capacity of mate. Selkirk eventually reached England with earnings of eight hundred pounds to show for an absence of eight years.

1. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 31

Captain Woodes Rogers published an eight-volume account of his Cruising Voyage round the World. The rescue of Selkirk is described therein. A landing party on the island brought back a wild-looking creature dressed in goat skins. Selkirk, for it was he, described his experiences. The first eight months he suffered from melancholy and terror. He built two huts, one for preparing food, the other for sleeping quarters. His time, outside that spent in caring for physical needs, was employed in reading, singing psalms, and praying. Selkirk claimed he was a better Christian in this solitude than ever he was before, or than, he was afraid, he should ever be again. His food consisted of crayfish, turtles, goat's flesh, turnips, cabbages, and plums. Captain Rogers cited other instances of solitary life on the island and said "whatever there is in these stories, this of Mr. Selkirk I know to be true".[1]

After Rogers' publication there were many others on the same subject. A well known and authentic report is that of Sir Richard Steele. Steele's Account of Selkirk varied but little from Rogers'. Rogers said that goats were the only animals to be found there;

1. Rogers: Cruise round the World p. 130

Steele described monsters of curious construction. Steele also described the change of Selkirk's facial expression wrought by a few months in civilization and Selkirk's regret at his loss of solitude. Selkirk claimed he was happier when he confined his wants to natural necessities. The end of Sir Richard's Account quotes Selkirk as saying, "I am now worth eight hundred pounds, but shall never be so happy as when I was not worth a farthing". Selkirk's experience told Defoe that a man could exist on a desert island, but the wealth of detail necessary to the narration of how a man could exist in such a situation was not forthcoming. As a result Defoe had to turn to other records.

Robert Knox tells his life on a desert island in An Historical Relation of ... Ceylon... together with an account of the detaining in Captivity of the Author and divers other Englishmen now living there, and of the Author's Miraculous Escape. There are external differences between Crusoe and Knox, but both were lonely, both lived on islands, and both had similar handicaps to overcome.

Mr. Secord says[1] that Knox's experience is the only one of the kind which approaches Crusoe's in the matter

1. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 33

of time covered and that, with few exceptions, it is the only one related in the first person with proper attention to the sequence of events and to the passage of time. "Hence, we find in Knox such statements as these: 'In this place I lived two years...'; '...I had been now some seven or eight years in this land...'; 'In this manner we four lived together some two years very lovingly and contentedly...' This way of accounting for the passage of time is exactly in the manner of Crusoe, who remarks: 'I had now been thirteen days on shore...'; 'I was now in the twenty-third year of residence in this island...'; 'It was now the month of December'; 'I was now entered on the seven and twentieth year of my captivity...' Notice that Defoe refers to his condition as one of captivity'".[1]

Narrative devices and situations similar to those in Robinson Crusoe are shown in the arrangements for food and shelter. Knox says: "Now having settled all business about my allowance, my next concern was to look after a house more convenient, for my present one was too small to dress my victuals in, and to sleep in too..."; "...and so I began to settle myself... seeming to be very well contented in this condition";

1. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 34

"I soon came to be well furnished..." Likewise Crusoe says: "Having now brought my mind a little to relish my condition... I began to make things as easy to me as I could"; "and now I began to apply myself to make such necessary things as I wanted..."[1] The similarity in the tone and style of these quotations is clear. The substance of the two relations has general likenesses. "The island experiences of each, for instance, begin at almost the same time. Young Knox on his father's ship had sailed from the Downs for the East Indies Company in 1658; on the 19th of November, 1659, the vessel was disabled in a 'mighty storm' at Masulipatam, and was ordered to Cottiar, Ceylon, where Knox, his father, and fourteen of the crew were taken captives by the natives. Crusoe's wreck occurred upon the 30th of September, 1659. Shortly after the beginning of their isolation both are afflicted with the ague, a disease of which the elder Knox died a year or so later. Both Knox and Crusoe are supplied with Bibles and other books of a pious character, and both open their Bibles at random to auspicious passages. Both spend much time in prayer and religious meditation.

In each case the wearing out of clothing gives rise to the problem of securing more. Like Crusoe,

1. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 34

Knox builds two or three houses, one of which he surrounds with a hedge to keep out spying eyes. He furnishes oil for his lamp from the cocoanuts; Crusoe, it will be recalled, used goat's tallow in a lamp of his own contrivance."[1] At the time of Crusoe's departure from the island, several Spaniards, Englishmen, and savages, began to inhabit Crusoe's erstwhile domain. "This situation is not unlike that on Ceylon (where Knox lived with three comrades). In both cases deliverance appeared remote; in both the situation was complicated by the presence of none but native women". Both Knox and Crusoe discussed the problem. The men who took native wives considered themselves married. "When Knox excapes, the population on Ceylon has been increased by some eighteen children of these white men and native women. Likewise Crusoe at his second and final departure found that the children of mixed parentage numbered 'near twenty in all'".[2]

Crusoe had a flock of goats, and his method of taming them was not the maiming of kids as did Selkirk, but the building of pens, a device used by Knox.[3]

These similarities between Robinson Crusoe and Knox's Ceylon indicate Defoe's use of source material.

1. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 35

2. Ibid., p. 36

3. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 37

Since Defoe was familiar with Knox's Ceylon, "These matters were known to Defoe and could not fail to find some place in Crusoe's endeavors to work out the problem of existence on the island".[1]

Defoe received the idea of writing a story of desert island life from Selkirk, and an embodiment of that idea from Knox.[2] He next needed a "large storehouse of details of life under unusual circumstances from which he could clothe the skeleton furnished by Selkirk and Knox".[3] This need was filled by Dampier's Voyages, New Voyage round the World and A Voyage to New Holland.

1. Secord , A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p.39

2. This method was not new to Defoe. The Apparition of Mrs. Veale was the result of the same procedure on a smaller scale. Mr. Trent says, "...in the case of The True Relation of the Apparition of one Mrs. Veale, Defoe invented next to nothing; that he was a skilful reporter rather than a brilliant hoaxer. The facts of the case tend to diminish his reputation for splendid creative mendacity, but they leave us abundant reason for praising his extraordinary faculty for giving life-likeness to his narrative and descriptive writings".
--Trent: Defoe; How to Know Him p.157

3. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 50

Dampier describes an uninhabited island off the coast of Venezuela as having "a riff or bank of rocks"[1] extending about three miles into the sea. From Crusoe's island a ledge of rocks extended. Dampier tells of a meeting between a Mosquito Indian who had been marooned on an island and who devised many ways to preserve his life and another Mosquito Indian. The lonely Indian showed the same great joy as did Friday upon meeting his father. The Voyages often mention islands stocked with goats. Dampier tells in detail his observations of tortoises and mentions parrots that speak. Crusoe used tortoises as a source of food and interestingly described his teaching a parrot to speak. Crusoe built a "periagua or canoe" after the directions given by Dampier. "Other devices used by Crusoe and mentioned and described by Dampier are the making of rafts, earthenware, umbrellas, baskets, and truncheons".[1]

Misson's Voyage of Leguat, a supposedly authentic desert island account, was published in both French and English in 1707. Defoe used a few incidents from this work in composing Robinson Crusoe. The attempt of Francois Leguat and his companions to grow grain on the island may be changed in Crusoe to the husbanding

1. Dampier, W.: A New Voyage Round the World p. 49

of rice, barley, and corn. "Leguat's party made umbrellas of tree tops; found great turtles (not water turtles however); frequently taught parrots to speak; used turtle fat to burn in lamps; and built a bark in which to escape. Though they had no tools, pitch, tar, cordage, compass, or anchor, necessity enabled them to surmount every obstacle".[1] This quotation lists the incidents that are expanded in Robinson Crusoe.

From Henry Pitman's A Relation of the great suffering and strange Adventures of Henry Pitman Defoe perhaps took material that contributed to Crusoe's island life and almost certainly adapted the story of Pitman's mutineers to Crusoe's rescue from the island. Pitman and his comrades lived for three months on a desolate island. Tortoises were their chief source of food. They built houses or huts; they attempted to make earthen vessels, which Crusoe did with success; they found, growing on the island, a weed that they substituted for tobacco and Crusoe discovered tobacco.

An incident in Pitman's Relation is parallel to Crusoe's deliverance from the island. Three members of a privateer seized control of the ship. One of the victims stumbled upon Pitman's party with whose

1. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 93

aid he was able to regain control of the privateer. The trouble makers, as in Robinson Crusoe, "are left ashore and the castaways set sail for England in the delivered ship".[1]

It may be said that Defoe wrote the island portion of Robinson Crusoe from Knox's Ceylon and the published accounts of Selkirk which suggested the subject and skeleton of the story, from Dampier's Voyages, a storehouse of valuable detail, and from Leguat's Voyage and Pitman's Relation which furnished certain incidents. Mr. Secord says:"Robinson Crusoe, finally, is not so much a fictitious autobiography... as it is a fictitious book of travel; the courses and geographical matters of which are based upon more or less authentic relations, but the details of which are largely invented by Defoe from suggestions contained in these relations. Defoe shifts the emphasis from matters of interest only to seamen to others of which are of more general human concern..."[2]

1. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 91
2. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 111

C. The Picaresque Influence on the Novels of Defoe.

The popularity of picaresque novels in the early eighteenth century undoubtedly had a great effect upon Defoe. English literature owes certain of the stories of Defoe to imitation of the Spanish picaroon,[1] a type of character that had existed in literature for centuries. The picaro or rogue character is, at an early period, represented by Petronius in his Satyricon; it persists in Lucian, in the Roman de Renart, in the fabliaux, and in other works popular during the middle ages. But the picaresque novel, as such, is of Spanish origin.

The first tale of the true picaresque type was called La Vida de Lazarillo de Tormes y de sus fortunas y adversidades. Upon its success it had many imitators in Spanish, among which were Don Quixote and Gil Blas, (which was "Spanish in tone and feeling")[2] and in other languages. As an illustration of the type of the novela picaresca a résumé of the Lazarillo de Tormes follows. Lazarillo, the son of a poor widow, is put in the care of a blind man who proves to be a cruel rascal. The young servant learns to outwit his

1. Ford, Jeremiah: Main Currents of Spanish Literature p. 212
2. Hume, Martin: Spanish Influence on English Literature p. 176

master and he escapes to the service of a priest, so niggardly that he locked all his food in a chest. Lazarillo manages to get access to the chest, but is eventually found out and discharged. The next master was apparently a gentleman, but in reality he was so impoverished that he lived on the poor returns of Lazarillo's begging. A dealer in papal indulgences takes Lazarillo in hand and teaches him much of the art of roguery. In the service of a chaplain Lazarillo becomes a water-crier and procures a new suit of clothes from his master's wardrobe. In the service of a government official, an alguazil, he finds dangerous employment, but finally Lazarillo acquires a government office and becomes prosperous. He marries a favorite of an arch-priest and lives, for a time, a happy life. A fresh series of difficulties occur to Lazarillo, but he does not relate them in this volume.

Lazarillo typifies the Spanish "novela picaresca" which is a result of the reaction to the Spanish romances of chivalry. The picaresque story shows the rascally side of life; it is a novel of manners with its descriptions of the various classes of people through which the rogue threaded his devious way;

it is openly autobiographical and relies on observation for subject matter, discarding what cannot come into the ordinary existence. The picaresque novel, as does the Lazarillo de Tormes, depicts the painful side of human experience with uncompromising harsh realism.[1]

Numerous English reprints in the Seventeenth century prove that the Lazarillo de Tormes was popular with the readers in England. In the early Eighteenth century there were many new translations of Spanish picaresque novels such as The Comical Works of Quevedo (1707, 1709, 1742), The Spanish Libertines which included La Picara Justina, Celestina, and Estevanillo Gonzales (1707). Even Lazarillo after a century and a half of popularity, was reprinted in 1708 and 1726. It is probable that Defoe, who had a wide interest in tales of adventures, read many of these Spanish translations.

Since Defoe wrote to interest the reader, a popular type of literature would be his natural model. It is possible that La Picara Justina, one of the first stories of a female rogue, may have suggested to Defoe the subject of Moll Flanders. The Fortunes and the Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders shows the

1. Warren, F.M.: History of the Novel p. 286

influence of the picaresque novel on Defoe's narratives. The rogue or picaro is not a villain or an impassioned criminal; he is the victim of circumstances that force him to live by his wits. As a result of his early mischief-making or occasional criminal acts, he may become an habitual criminal. So it was with Moll Flanders. She was born of a felon in Newgate Prison, but her early upbringing was honest. When Moll's foster-mother died, a well-to-do lady with two sons, adopted the destitute Moll. The elder son seduced Moll and forced her to accept his younger brother's offer of marriage. After the death of her husband, Moll left her children and set out in the world. Instead of passing from master to master as did Lazarillo, Moll, the picara, went from husband to husband. She married a tradesman who deserted her. She discovered that her marriage to a Virginia planter was incestuous; pretending to be a wealthy widow, she wed an Irish landowner only to discover that he was pretending too. After these and several other amorous adventures, Moll found herself destitute at the age of fifty. Since a female friend was a receiver of stolen goods, Moll had an out-

let for her ill-gotten gains. She became an able thief and availed herself of all opportunities. For example, when Moll saw two rings on a window sill, she rapped sharply on the pane. As there was no response, she broke the pane and stole the rings. If there had been an answer to her rapping, Moll would have warned the owner of the rings that two suspicious fellows had been eyeing the jewelry. She practised many of the usual tricks of the thief. Eventually she was caught and transported. After eight years in the colonies with her husband, Moll returned to England. Her episodic life, characteristic of the picara, ended in repentance-- and material comfort.

In 1665 Richard Head and Francis Kirkman wrote the English Rogue, describing the life of Meriton Latroon, a witty Extravagant. It has been said that Robinson Crusoe is to some extent indebted to the English Rogue.[1] However, Crusoe does not meet the requirements of the picaresque character, for he does not show rascality except in his disobedience to his father. The adventure and travel material in Robinson Crusoe, which resembled that of Head and Kirkman's

1. Secord, A.W.: The Narrative Method of Defoe p. 74

work, was derived from the great body of literature on foreign lands. It is probable that Crusoe's similarities to the English Rogue are due to their common source, the accounts of foreign travels. Although Moll Flanders, Captain Singleton, and Roxana show the influence of the picaresque novel, Robinson Crusoe does not conform to the character of the picaro and owes nothing to the English Rogue.

Defoe, as did the picaresque novel, depicted the low-life character rather than the heroic. However, he turned from the standard fabliaux and romances of roguery to get closer to the realities of life.[1] Defoe used native material which he treated skillfully in the picaresque method.

1. Chandler, F.W.: The Literature of Roguery p. 286

D. Defoe's Individuality

Although it has been shown that Defoe used as a source of material for his narratives the great body of literature on travels, voyages, and adventures, there are certain characteristics of Defoe's writing that are peculiar to him. Defoe used a very effective, simple style with which he was able to express ideas that were often far in advance of his time; and he achieved a vital realism.

Defoe's training in political writing was of great value to his novels, in that the use of clear, concise, and simple language necessary in work to be distributed to the masses is a factor in the popularity of his narratives. The political pamphlet, to be useful, had to be convincing. Defoe's ability to write convincingly on opposite sides of the question cannot be doubted when the literary record of his later political life is examined. As a child, he copied long passages from the Bible, and while in school at Newington Green he reconstructed sermons from notes.[1] There can be little doubt that such exercises might influence the development of a literary style. The handling of incident and detail in

1. Dottin: Life of Daniel Defoe p. 12

Defoe's novels stimulates interest and convinces the reader of the narrative's reality. The apparently artless series of incidents which succeed in mastering universal emotions constitute the main characteristic of Defoe's realism.

But it is not journalistic experience alone that is responsible for the simplicity of style in the narratives, for Defoe in the Mercurius Politicus says, "An historical account it (this magazine) ought certainly to be, that is as to the manner of the writing or Stile: It ought to be brief, easy, pure and perspicuous. The subject matter ought always to be truth,.... As for the first qualification, viz. Stile, I shall endeavor after it merely as a writer. As to the second I mean of delivering fact and truth, I shall do it both as an English gentleman, and an historian, whose peculiar province and glory it is never to dare to tell a Falsehood, and always to dare to tell a truth".[1] Now that Defoe has given his opinion of what style ought to be, he describes the writing of the author of The Independent Whig. "An author ought to have a stile: He has often one single sentence, which consists of three or four different kinds of Language; a prosaic expression next a poetical one; thirdly, a string of philosophical terms; fourthly, the cant

1. Defoe: Mercurius Politicus July 1720 p. 4

words of the street or the kennel; fifthly, a tragick rant, and sixthly, the drolling Joke of a Merry Andrew; frequently form the several members of one and the same long and motly period. Stile,..., which is, in other Writers, the effect of their judgment and choice, is in him, a wild ranging together of words, that never were acquainted, till he made them so, the effect of huddling over many books of several sorts, understanding none of any sort, the Effect of a perplex'd Imagination, a gorg'd Memory, and a blundering faculty at Application".[1]

The following passage illustrates the simple, concise language for which Robinson Crusoe is famed. "When Friday came to hear him speak, and look in his face, it would have moved any one to tears to have seen how Friday kissed him, embraced him, hugged him, cried, laughed, hallooed, jumped, danced, sung; then cried again, wrung his hands, beat his own face and head, and then sung and jumped about again, like a distracted creature. It was a good while before I could make him speak to me, or tell me what was the matter; but when he came a little to himself, he told me that it was his father".[2] This narrative perfection was doubtless the result of Defoe's political or journalistic experience

1. Defoe: Mercurius Politicus July 1720 p. 50-51

2. Defoe: Robinson Crusoe

and conscious effort.

Defoe wrote for the middle-class people. By doing this his works were appreciated by all classes. The means that enabled him to reach the emotions of all the strata of society were simplicity of language and material. Defoe's opinion of the middle class is expressed by Robinson Crusoe, ".... that mine was the middle state, or what might be called the upper station of low life, which he had found by long experience was the best state in the world, the most suited to human happiness, not exposed to the miseries and hardships, the labour and sufferings, of the mechanic part of mankind, and not embarrassed with the pride, luxury, ambition, and envy of the upper part of mankind".[1]

It is probable that Defoe's desire to reach all classes is a factor in his clear exposition. Frequently terms, uncommon or otherwise, unclear, are explained by the narrator. Robinson Crusoe often explains himself as shown in the following quotation. "The next thing to my ink's being wasted, was that of my bread; I mean the biscuit which I brought out of the ship".[2] Defoe uses repetition effectively. The reader constantly meets expressions similar to "as I have mentioned before".[3]

1. Defoe: Robinson Crusoe p. 2 (Maynadier)
2. Defoe: Robinson Crusoe Vol. 1 p. 149 (Maynadier)
3. Defoe: Robinson Crusoe Vol. 1 p. 154 (Maynadier)

The simple style makes the exposition natural, clear, and familiar.

Although the material of Defoe's novels is simple and homely, this does not mean that the material is limited and dull. The narratives show variety and fancy, for Defoe was exceedingly imaginative within the realm of practicality. Paul Dottin says, "De Foe was especially good at creating the effect of fear and of desolation. His simple, natural language made his scenes of terror and of death seem unusually awful".[1] His simplicity of language and material expresses a true realistic style, natural, clear, and universal.

Defoe, with the asset of a simple, effective, verbal style, was able to put in his narratives certain ideas that were far in advance of his time. He advocated education for women, improvement of roads, and an academy to regulate the English language. Even in these theories, his great power of vivid description is seen in concrete pictures from everyday life. Colonel Jacque teaches a fine lesson in social evils. Defoe makes clear the moral duty of society to provide training for waifs typified by Jacque. These uncared-for children, who with proper

1. Dottin: Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Daniel Defoe p. 220

guidance might become creditable citizens, are "bred up every year for the executioner".[1] The honest reader of Colonel Jacque should realize his responsibility for the homeless child. The vicious reader of Colonel Jacque should discover that success comes from virtue, and the only good end of an impious life is repentance. Colonel Jacque also contains an expression of Defoe's human feelings and intelligence. Through the words of Jacque, who, at one stage of his career, is an overseer on a plantation, Defoe expresses a present-day educational theory on physical punishment. He believed that negroes could be governed better by appeal to their reason and gratitude than by the lash. Jacque made the wrongdoer see his mistake. Defoe, in defense of his subject, says, "if possible, posterity might be persuaded to try gentle methods with those creatures, and use them with humanity; assuring them that if they did so, adding the common prudence which each particular case would suggest, the negroes would do their work faithfully and cheerfully, and be the same as christian servants except that they would be the more thankful and laborious of the two".[2] Defoe, in the face of the general slave practices of his day, believed that love was a safer chain than fear. The humanity and intelligence of

1. Defoe: Colonel Jacque p. xix
2. Wilson: Life of Defoe Vol. 3 p. 497

the author of the quotation is apparent.

Human nature is typified by the character of Robinson Crusoe. The tendencies to travel, to learn by experience, to find one's own happiness by reason are essentially human. Crusoe is representative of a great group of men who are called to adventure. Not only Crusoe, but Moll Flanders, Colonel Jacque, and Captain Singleton learn the lessons taught by experience. Without exception they discover happiness through reason which declares honesty the best policy and repentance the means to salvation. The portraiture of Defoe's characters, whose experiences are those met by many mortals, is real and actual.

The unvarying interest that Defoe had in human nature gave him sympathy and understanding in depicting life. Crusoe, who demonstrates Defoe's detailed nautical knowledge which was gained from conversation and reading, is a fine portrayal of an English sailor of the time, unemotional and intensely practical. Here Defoe's simple style is of significance; it is "stripped of any touch of artistry; it is exactly the language which a talkative sailor would use in relating his adventures. This is why Robinson Crusoe is a masterpiece of realism; it can no more be forgotten than could a page of history be blotted

out".[1] The low-life or upper-class character is realistically portrayed by Defoe, for he is a master of diction which is in unison with his material.

The adventures of Crusoe make use of Defoe's wide geographical background, the most of which he must have gained from reading. Crusoe's travels take him to widely separated parts of the globe, yet geographical inaccuracies are rare. Defoe's acquisitive mind, enriched not only with wide readings but also with social contact with all types of people, makes possible the fascinating, true-to-type character, Robinson Crusoe.

In Robinson Crusoe Defoe gives a graphic account of life as he saw it in an English sailor. In Roxana he pictures the courtesan of the upper classes; in Moll Flanders, the criminal women of low life. Each of these narratives is effective through the use of a simple, natural style. The author's intelligence and imagination are demonstrated in that remarkable picture of Colonel Jacque, a child bred to crime. He painted his characters with vital reality. Yet throughout his novels Defoe is an unmistakable moralist, for his uncompromising puritan sense of right and wrong pervades the narratives. As the literary genius Defoe painted life as he found it, as the moralist he desired to leave it better.

1. Dottin: Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Defoe p. 211

III

Bennett

A. The Influence of Bennett's Life upon his novels.

Arnold Bennett will probably survive in literary history as the artist who painted The Five Towns. Perhaps the most important influence on his novels was his birth in 1867 in Hanley, Staffordshire, a section of England known as the pottery district. The centuries-old Potteries have established a little community set off from the world by its business and its self-satisfaction. "You cannot eat a meal in decency without the aid of the Five Towns".[1] Since the Five Towns are also the scene of coal-mining and iron-smelting, their architecture is made up of ovens and chimneys and the atmosphere is sullied with smoke. Even though a few miles from this manufacturing center lies the typical English countryside, The Five Townsmen are very much satisfied with their busy, commercial existence. This background furnishes the middle-class tradesmen for the characters in Bennett's novels.

1. Bennett, Arnold: The Old Wives' Tale p. 3

When a youngster, Bennett was made to adopt regular habits. He was taught that tidiness and order save time and money, which precept he both practiced and preached. Bennett, as a result of his early practical training and commercial background, saw the acquisition of money as a major passion in life. The man of The Five Towns measures his success by his ability to accumulate wealth and this perspective influenced the novels of Bennett. Sophia of the Old Wives' Tale, when she foresees Gerald's financial straits and possible desertion, secretes a considerable sum of money. Her prudence proves to be her safety after Gerald has abandoned her. Sophia's life is built thereafter on the pursuit of money. Through her profiteering during the Siege of Paris, she lays the cornerstone of a considerable fortune. Edwin Clayhanger as a youth longs to perfect his talents, but always with a view to the pot of gold at the end of his dream. Hilda Lessways imagines her comfort and pride as the wife of the well-to-do Clayhanger, whom she had not met at that time.

It is probable that Bennett's religious experience was with Methodism, because his novels show familiarity with this sect. As he pictures the tradesman class of

people, the religion of Bennett's characters is invariably Wesleyan Methodism. Bennett's own attitude toward this creed is demonstrated by Edwin Clayhanger. Clayhanger's one life-long hatred of a man was occasioned by the formation of a Saturday afternoon Bible class by a zealous young preacher. The object of his dislike drops from Clayhanger's view for many years. In Clayhanger's maturity, he has as a guest in his home this same minister, who seems to be a jolly, human person far from his boyish impression.

The religion of Bennett's characters is not a vital factor in their lives. Perhaps it is because Bennett's observation of industrial life has noted the major power of money. Religion is unable to guide the powers of Auntie Hamps who sanctimoniously works havoc in house-holds outside her own. Benbow, the brother-in-law of Clayhanger, is a church official whose first thoughts on Auntie Hamps' death concern the disposal of her money. One might say that religion, labeled Methodism in these books, is not a positive power, yet as giving rise to an ethical code, it has a restraining influence. Sophia of The Old Wives' Tale, after living alone for sometime in Paris, resists the advances of the old grocer and the friendly Chirac. She doesn't know why she

refuses these chances for happiness, but she finds her pleasure in her business acumen. It is obvious that Bennett saw that religion is often not powerful enough to deliver the middle-class character from the forces of money and sex.

Bennett was educated at the Newcastle Middle School. As it was not intended that authorship should be his profession, he received little encouragement to write. He may have had some interest along literary lines, for he contributed several articles to the local news publication. He devoted himself to the study of law in the office of his father who was a solicitor.

Bennett left the Five Towns in 1889 to work for a London solicitor. His desire upon leaving the provincial town to go on educating himself in practical, material, and artistic spheres brought him in contact with taste and wealth in London.[1] While working as a solicitor's clerk, Bennett found time to study literature. He read a great deal of both English and French works. The influence of French literature upon Bennett's style is discussed at a point farther on in this thesis.

After several years in the same position, Bennett abandoned law for a journalistic career. This step

1. Bennett, Mrs. Arnold: Arnold Bennett p. 34

greatly influenced his later writing of novels. In 1896 he became the assistant editor of a current magazine, Woman, whose aim was to teach the public the best way to make the best of everything. Three years later he became the editor of this publication. For years he had to write articles on furnishings, cooking, social manners, and dress. This not only developed his taste for the beautiful and the harmonious but also acquired for him a knowledge of the virtues and shortcomings of women. The fact that Arnold Bennett possessed a fine understanding of domestic life was due to his keen observation and to his journalistic training. During the several years that he was the editor of the magazine, Woman, his business interests were those of women. He learned all the details necessary to the running of a household. He learned the various problems of the housewife. His magazine had to interest, amuse, and educate women.

Perhaps no other English novelist devotes such care and attention to the middle-class woman in her home. Bennett pictures the wife in command of the home. Mrs. Baines, that dominating mother, prevents Sophia from following her chosen profession. Constance Povey illustrates the power and the incompetency of

women, for she indulges her son Cyril to his detriment. Bennett's women characters and their domestic relationships are minutely treated. Hilda and Edwin Clayhanger find the same problems and answers that all mankind has found in living together. Bennett's great understanding of domestic life is shown in the various households of his novels, and a fine study of marital relationship is pictured in These Twain. At the end of this book the adjustment of Clayhanger and Hilda to each other is shown by the following quotation. "...the delicious thought that she had power over him, that she was shaping the large contours of his existence, made her feel solemn in her bliss. And yet simultaneously she was reflecting with a scarcely perceptible hardness: 'It's each for himself in marriage after all, and I've got my own way'. And then she noticed the whiteness of his shirt-front under her chin, and that reminded her of his mania for arranging his linen according to his own idea in his own drawer, and the absurd tidiness of his linen; and she wanted to laugh.

'What a romance she has made of my life!' thought Edwin, confused and blushing, as she loosed him. And though he looked round with affection at the walls

which would soon no longer be his, the greatness of the adventure of existence with this creature, to him unique, and the eternal expectation of some new ecstasy, left no room in his heart for a regret".[1]

In 1900 Bennett gave up his journalistic duties to devote himself to literature. Having lived in an industrial environment, he had, as a result, a materialistic point of view. "He regards himself as a machine which has to produce book after book, play after play, to amuse, interest, and educate others".[2] Since his business was writing, Bennett carried in his pocket a loose-leaf note book for jotting down suggestions for literary material. It was his practical instinct that bade him do this. Bennett realized that daily observations, daily experiences, were invaluable in his business. "The diary-keeper resolved to write in the journal so many words a day, to improve his powers of observation; and he kept his word. The outcome of such discipline, joined to industry, may be judged from an entry made three years later: 'Sunday, 31st Dec. 1899. This year I have written 335,340 words, grand total 224 articles and stories, and four instal-

1. Bennett: <u>These Twain</u> p. 542

2. Bennett, Mrs. Arnold: Arnold Bennett p. 42

ments of a serial called The Gates of Wrath have actually been published; also my book of plays, Polite Farces. My work included six or eight short stories not yet published, also the greater part of a 55,000 word serial -- Love and Life -- for Tillotsons, and the whole draft, 80,000 words, of my Staffordshire novel, Anna Tellwright'".[1] Thus Bennett's commercial point of view is shown in his method of composition. His self-confidence in his practical abilities is shown in his writings, such as How to Live on Twenty Four Hours a Day, The Human Machine, and Self and Self Management.

He wrote books of two types, the first to insure his literary fame, and the second to insure his comforts and luxuries. The Old Wives' Tale and The Clayhanger Trilogy are of the first order. In a period of seven years, Mrs. Bennett says of her husband, after he had written The Old Wives' Tale, "Bennett was convinced that the publisher would lose money by publishing such a sincere, artistic, and realistic book".[2] Bennett obviously felt the importance and power of money, just as his characters do. Truly the man of business if doubled with the artist in Bennett.

1. Darton, F.J.Harvey: Arnold Bennett p. 14
2. Bennett, Mrs. Arnold: Arnold Bennett p. 52

That Bennett placed his writing on a business basis is obvious. The Old Wives' Tale, published in 1908, marked the beginning of his best period. Clayhanger, Hilda Lessways, and These Twain were written within the next seven years. During this period he produced these novels rated his best; in drama Cupid and Common Sense, What the Public Wants, and The Honeymoon; in lighter narrative Buried Alive, The Glimpse, Helen of the High Hand, and The Card; in the short story, a collection entitled The Matador of the Five Towns and Other Stories. He also published in this period Books and Persons, a number of lay sermons, including Literary Taste and How to Form it, and a travel sketch book from Those United States. The wide literary scope and fertility of the author are apparent, not only in this period but also in the succeeding years.

Bennett's natural powers of observation and his interest in life were responsible for the completeness of his novels. Mrs. Bennett says of her husband "He loves to study human nature and to enjoy all that life offers".[1] He was never the tramp or the dreamer, for in all his travels he had a definite object. He knew how to study people, pictures, architecture, or

1. Bennett, Mrs. Arnold: Arnold Bennett p. 120

furniture. His keen curiosity found human nature everywhere the same. After the revelation of character shown in The Old Wives' Tale, it is easy to believe that "Arnold Bennett is a man who can see more in an hour than many can see in a week or lifetime".[1]

The Preface to The Old Wives' Tale gives the reader valuable information on the author's powers of observation. While sitting in a restaurant, Bennett saw a beautiful young girl laughing at the oddities of an old woman. He was struck by the irony and pathos of the picture. He said, "and the fact that the change from the young girl to the stout ageing woman is made up of an infinite number of infinitesimal changes, each unperceived by her, only intensifies the pathos".[2] The fact that Bennett could see life objectively gave his novel its completeness.

His remarkable powers of memory are shown in his descriptions of life when he was a child. The reader sees Bursley and the Baines' shop through the eyes of an observant child. Bennett says "in the seventies, in the first decade of my life, I had lived in the actual draper's shop of the Baines's, and knew it only as a child could know it".[3] From keen observation

1. Bennett, Mrs. Arnold: Arnold Bennett p. 61
2. Bennett: The Old Wives' Tale Preface p. vi
3. Bennett: The Old Wives' Tale Preface p. viii

Bennett has written The Old Wives' Tale, a novel that seems to have no beginning, middle, and end, for it is an accurate transcript of life.

Perhaps the most important of the life influences on the novels of Bennett was the physical background of the Five Towns. The keen, shrewd mind of Bennett found his literary material in his early life impressions. His training together with his middle-class environment gave him the commercial point of view in his writing. Bennett's journalistic experience developed a deep understanding of domestic relationships and trained him to give complete expression to his subject. The practicality of the Englishman enabled Bennett to undertake a great work such as The Old Wives' Tale and his interest in French literature coupled with his life in France gave him the ability to handle the subject artistically. Arnold Bennett, one of the foremost of contemporary novelists, died on March 27, 1931.

B. Philosophical Influences on Bennett's Novels.

Arnold Bennett was, at his own word, a disciple of the Goncourt brothers, Flaubert, de Maupassant, and Turgenieff. He was influenced by these naturalists and has been called "one of the first writers to bring naturalism into English".[1] The purpose of this section is to show the influence of the naturalistic philosophy, which had its roots in positivism, on Bennett's novels.

Auguste Comte (1798-1857) was the man who gave systematic expression to the theory of positivism. He believed that each of our conceptions, each branch of knowledge passes successively through three stages, the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive. In the positive stage causes are no longer sought, for the positivist is content with a law. The greatest aim of the positive philosophy is to advance the study of society into the third of these stages, to remove social phenomena from the sphere of theological and metaphysical conceptions, and to introduce among them the same scientific observation of their laws which has given us physics, chemistry, and physiology.

1. Editorial: New Republic April 8, 1931

Comte approached the phenomena of human character and social existence with the expectation of finding them as reducible to general laws as the other phenomena of the universe.

One of the foremost exponents of Comte's theories was Hippolyte Adolphe Taine (1828-1893). He was a philosopher of the epoch which succeeded the era of romanticism in France. The ideal of the newer generation was truth, their object was to get as near scientific truth as possible. Taine conducted a searching investigation into mankind and his verdict was one of unqualified condemnation. Taine defined the modern scientific spirit as follows: "Its first rule in the search for truth is to reject all extraneous authority, to yield only to direct evidence, to wish to touch and to see, to have faith in testimony only after examination, discussion, and verification; its greatest aversion is for affirmations without proof, which it calls prejudices, and for unquestioned belief, which it calls credulity".[1] Taine believed that the soul is a natural product, and should be treated by the same methods as other natural phenomena. He compared the position of the human family in the midst of the blind and indifferent powers of nature to that of a lot of field-

1. Babbitt: Introduction to L'Histoire de la Litterature Anglaise p. iii-iv

mice exposed to the tramplings of a herd of elephants, and said, "the best fruit of our science is cold resignation which, pacifying and preparing the spirit, reduces suffering to bodily pain."[1] Taine summed up his theory in this quotation: "Que les faits soient physiques ou moraux, il n' importe, ils ont toujours des causes; il y en a pour l' ambition, pour le courage, pour la véracité, comme pour la digestion, pour le mouvement musculaire, pour la chaleur animale. Le vice et la vertu sont des produits comme le vitriol et la sucre, et toute donnée complex naît par le rencontre d'autres données plus simplex dont elle depend".[1]

The positivism of Taine gave rise to the Naturalist movement. In the period of George Sand and her idealized fiction, of the romantics, Victor Hugo, and Gautier, Flaubert's Madame Bovary, with its life-like portraits of provincial mediocrities and its picture of the inevitable procedure of life, appeared with all the air of a long-planned innovation.[2] Flaubert became a dominant personality in the literature of the second half of the nineteenth century. The brilliant brothers, Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, were meeting

1. Babbitt: Introduction to L'Histoire de la Litterature Anglaise p. 11

2. Josephson: Zola and His Time p. 56

great success in the field of novel-writing. They too had a thirst for reproducing reality exactly. The method of Zola illustrates the seeking after realistic effect. He would take out a character, reflect upon its nature and place it in a particular setting. "Then he would study the people with whom his character would come into contact in such a class, 'the places he would inhabit, the air he would breathe, his daily life, down to the most trivial occupation'.[1] Notebook in hand, he would proceed to frequent the milieu he had chosen, often to his own great discomfort and danger-- the tradespeople of Les Halles for instance treated him with great rudeness, thinking that he was spying out business secrets. After some months he felt that he had absorbed this kind of life, knew its language, the kinds of episodes which took place there, that he was able, in short, to transmit its peculiar perfume or genius".[1]

When Arnold Bennett was working in London in the last decade of the nineteenth century, he aligned himself with a group of young radicals who had the French masters of naturalism as their ideals. The rule of life was frustration and this theme Bennett used in

1. Josephson: Zola and His Time p. 121

his first novel, A Man from the North. "He wrote this novel under what he calls "The sweet influence of the de Goncourts, Turgeniff, Flaubert, and de Maupassant... The purpose uppermost in the mind of Mr. Bennett was to imitate what he calls the physical characteristics of the French Novels. There were to be no poetical quotations, no titles to the chapters; the narrative was to be divided by Roman numerals only. In a word the book was to be a mosaic of imitations of Flaubert and of the de Goncourts. There was to be no bowing to sentimentality. Life being grey, sinister, and melancholy, the book must be sinister, grey, and melancholy".[1]

During the period in which Bennett was working in a solicitor's office, he spent his leisure hours gorging on English and French literature. In 1900 he went to live in France and remained there for eight years. He had long regarded de Maupassant's Une Vie as a supreme novel. Bennett says, "I settled in the privacy of my own head that my book about the development of a young girl into a stout old lady must be the English Une Vie".[2] He decided to out-do de Maupassant's work by giving the life history of two women. The result of this deliberate undertaking was the Old Wives' Tale, which, on the date of its publication, called forth

1. Editorial: Bookman November 1911 p. 225
2. Bennett: The Old Wives' Tale Preface p. vii

the following comment from Bennett. "This day is the most important of my life! I have done my very best.. I shall never be able to do better... It will decide our future!"[1.]

As illustrative of the influence of naturalism on Bennett, certain similarities are here pointed out. De Maupassant acknowledged the fundamental need of prolonged and incessant work in order to attain success in writing.[2.] Bennett's well-known businesslike attitude toward his art is expressed by his wife who says that Bennett, "who day after day at regular times entered his sanctuary, needed all his energy to perform his office of writing a book".[3.]

De Maupassant believed that "all things are subject to an inexorable fatality".[4.] He presented the sordid, the commonplace, and the disagreeable. These qualities are also found in the Old Wives' Tale and in the Clayhanger Trilogy, but they enable the novels to "record what is always so significant in the lives of everyday people who make a civilization, if not a culture-- their wants".[5.] The wealth of detail supplied by

1. Bennett, Mrs. Arnold: Arnold Bennett p. 53
2. Riddell: Flaubert and de Maupassant p. 37
3. Bennett, Mrs. Arnold: Arnold Bennett p. 52
4. Riddell, Flaubert and de Maupassant p. 14
5. Editorial: The Saturday Review's Literature April 4,1931 p. 707

Bennett's omnivorous and tenacious memory finds a parallel in the fact that "de Maupassant drew plentifully upon his memories".[1] Both authors achieved in their novels a sense of eternal life. De Maupassant's works end with "a broken-off effect, leaving in the reader's mind the idea of an action still continuing, as in real life".[2] It is exactly this feeling that one experiences on reading Arnold Bennett's Old Wives' Tale.

The priests and representatives of the church drawn by de Maupassant are stupid, commonplace, or hateful.[3] When Bennett presented the religious individuals of the Five Towns, he drew insincere, weak, and ineffectual characters. In the Old Wives'Tale Daniel Povey was charged with the murder of his wife. "Never before had the Rector spoken to the Nonconformist Samuel (the brother of Daniel), but now he spoke to him; he squeezed his hand... The Rector shook his head and shook a senile tear out of his eye".[4]

In the novels of de Maupassant "the financial items in the matter of business dealings, of inheritance, and of other money transactions recur constantly".[5]

1. Boyd: Guy de Maupassant p. 134
2. Riddell: Flaubert and de Maupassant p. 37
3. Riddell: Flaubert and de Maupassant p. 19
4. Bennett: The Old Wives' Tale p. 232
5. Riddell: Flaubert and de Maupassant p. 41

Bennett's Five Townsmen with their entirely material point of view make a great deal of commercial detail necessary. Business detail is seen in the picture of the auction at which the Baines' establishment and Critchlow's shop were put up for sale.[1] Again, Madame Foucault suggested taking in boarders. "They will pay a hundred and thirty francs a month, in advance, for the middle bedroom... then there would be the meals. We could demand one franc for the café au lait, two and a half francs for the lunch, and three francs for the dinner. Without counting other things. That would mean over five hundred francs a month, at least. And what would they cost us? Almost nothing!"[2]

In Une Vie many definite time indications are found. The year, the month, "the day, the hour of an event is often mentioned with extreme exactitude".[3] Expressions such as "It was about five minutes to eight on a chilly morning after Easter", "About a fortnight later-it was a fine Saturday in early August", "It was Saturday, the third of September, a beautiful day".[4] appear constantly in Bennett's works.

The effect of odors on man is observed by

1. Bennett: The Old Wives' Tale p. 271
2. Ibid., p. 401
3. Riddell: Flaubert and de Maupassant p. 38
4. Bennett: The Old Wives Tale p. 200, 388, 400

de Maupassant[1] and by Bennett. For example, in The Old Wives' Tale is found "The stairs, which smelt of damp even in summer, disgusted Sophia... Like the concierge, the law emitted an odour---the odour of uncleanliness on a hot August day".[1] Sounds and colors are commonly used by both authors. Bennett described a street scene thus; "Huge red and yellow cars were swimming in thunder along Deansgate; lorries jolted and rattled..."[2] De Maupassant "notes the sounds proper to his description. 'Sometimes we are invited to listen to the animals of the country, especially the crowing of cocks, and the barking of dogs. Sometimes it is the ringing of bells that we hear, or the passing of vehicles, or the confused murmur or more definite noises of the city'"[3]

It has been pointed out that the style of both de Maupassant and Bennett is characterized by financial detail, by an un-flattering attitude toward the clergy, by details of time, sound, odor, and color. In the Old Wives' Tale Constance illustrates the positivistic doctrine, for she is ruled by circumstance; Sophia, although she succeeds in leaving Bursley, is controlled by Bursley's ethical code.

1. Bennett: The Old Wives' Tale p. 395
2. Ibid., p. 573
3. Riddell: Flaubert and de Maupassant p. 43

Through the inspiration of the French naturalists "Bennett developed a naturalism of his own, highly original and absolutely English. But it was an English mind that had never yet appeared in English literature--the mind of the manufacturing English, practical, prosaic, shrewd, tenacious, cocky, preoccupied with money-- making and with the new and tangible advantages which money can buy for people just rising in the world".[1] Bennett's The Old Wives' Tale may be called French in its artistic conception and English in its thorough execution.

1. Editorial in The New Republic April 8, 1931 p. 194

C. Bennett's Individuality

In his novels of the Five Towns Bennett proves himself to be a master of detail. Although he deals with the rather ugly life of the townsman, Bennett sees romance in drab existence. Dwellers in the Five Towns can identify places, persons, and events in Bennett's novels, for he writes his stories with an absolute fidelity to real life.[1]

In his novels, Bennett uses a method of minute realistic detail that is studiously undramatic and unemotional in development. His natural gifts of an unusually sensitive mind and a retentive memory enable him to see life in its completeness. His journalistic experience undoubtedly developed a clear, well-rounded, expository style.

By manipulation of amass of detail Bennett presents a pageant of life from early promise to decline and death. When a servant asks the young son of the house to leave the fire alone and he refuses, Mr. Bennett expresses himself thus: "'Now, Master Cyril', Amy protested, 'will you leave that fire alone? It's not you that can mend my fires'.

1. Darton, F.J.Harvey: Arnold Bennett p. 36

" A boy of nine, great and heavy for his years, with a full face and very short hair, bent over the smoking grate. It was about five minutes to eight on a chilly morning after Easter. Amy, hastily clad in blue, with a rough brown apron, was setting the breakfast table. The boy turned his head, still bending.

" 'Shut up, Ame', he replied, smiling. Life being short, he called her Ame when they were alone together. 'Or I'll catch you one in the eye with the poker.'"[1]

The Old Wives' Tale is a splendid example of Bennett's carefulness of detail and solidity of structure. What is apparently a saturation of facts and statistics achieves a revelation of character and impression of true life. Bennett's style is characterized by use of detail, the amplitude of it making the material so natural and significant that the sense of life is never absent.

In the dirty and unromantic Five Towns Bennett found human passions for his realistic novels and made romance of them. He not only portrays the decency and endurance of ordinary existence but also moments of beauty, terror, and heroism. Sophia, as a girl in her teens, suffered as a self-accused murderer, because her paralytic father died alone when she should have been

1. Bennett, Arnold: The Old Wives' Tale p. 200

at his bedside. Samuel Povey, the meek little shopkeeper, worked untiringly to save the criminal Daniel Povey. Constance Povey dies as the result of going out to vote. In a sense she gives her life for a political principle.

The romance and the miracle of life to the individual is constantly set forth in Bennett's novels. Darius Clayhanger looks back on his life from workhouse to master of a printing shop as a stupendous epic. Edwin during his first visit to a public house sees a clog dancer. Clogs were symbols of slavery in this period, and yet the audience saw beauty in the dance. "Thus is rendered back to the people in the charming form of beauty that which the instinct of the artist had taken from the ugliness of the people".[1] No one saw a romantic miracle when Stifford, Clayhanger's clerk, at the age of sixteen began to arrive at work a bit early rather than a bit late, to part his hair more carefully, and to dress with neatness. Edwin Clayhanger, at the end of the book, after he has decided to marry Hilda, "braced himself for the exquisite burden of life".[2] The Old Wives' Tale and The Clayhanger Trilogy are characterized by revelations of the wonderful in

1. Bennett: Clayhanger p. 98

2. Bennett: Clayhanger p. 698

things that are ordinarily passed by as trivialities.

"Life is good enough for me. I won't alter it. I will set it down as it is".[1] This quotation from Tchekoff denotes Arnold Bennett's aim in writing. Bennett holds human nature in consideration and makes allowances for its shortcomings. His well-balanced mind takes from life what life has to offer. His wife says, "Arnold Bennett, being a philosopher does not expect from human nature more than human nature can give".[2]

His realism deals with commonplace people in colorless and unimpressive surroundings, but it reveals how the seeming monotony of existence pulsates inwardly with moving drama. He chooses characters "who would pass unnoticed in a crowd".[3] Samuel and Constance Povey regard their boy Cyril just as thousands of middle-class parents regard their children. "Mysterious creature, this child, mysteriously growing and growing in the house! To his mother he was a delicious joy at all times save when he disobeyed his father. But now for quite a considerable period there had been no serious collision. The boy seemed to be acquiring virtue as well as sense.

1. Bennett: Books and Persons p. 118
2. Bennett, Mrs. A.: Arnold Bennett p. 41
3. Bennett: Old Wives' Tale p. vi

And really he was charming. So big, truly enormous (every one remarked on it), and yet graceful, lithe, with a smile that could ravish. And he was distinguished in his bearing. Without depreciating Samuel in her faithful heart, Constance saw plainly the singular differences between Samuel and the boy. Save that he was dark, and that his father's 'dangerous look' came into those childish eyes occasionally, Cyril had now scarcely an obvious resemblance to his father. He was a Baines. This naturally deepened Constance's family pride. Yes, he was mysterious to Constance, though probably not more so than any other boy to any other parent. He was equally mysterious to Samuel, but otherwise Mr. Povey had learned to regard him in the light of a parcel which he was always attempting to wrap up in a piece of paper imperceptibly too small. When he successfully covered the parcel at one corner it burst out at another, and this went on for ever, and he could never get the string on. Nevertheless, Mr. Povey had unabated confidence in his skill as a parcel-wrapper. The boy was strangely subtle at times, but then at times he was astoundingly ingenuous, and then his dodges would not deceive the dullest. Mr. Povey knew himself more than a match for his son. He was

proud of him because he regarded him as not an ordinary boy; he took it as a matter of course that his boy should not be an ordinary boy."[1] The environment and characters of which he writes are so understandingly drawn that his Bursley is every provincial town and his Bainses are all towns people everywhere.

The Old Wives' Tale and the Clayhanger Trilogy are such faithful representations of life that they seem to have no beginning, middle, or end. "Bennett is a materialist who deals mainly with the outward aspects of material things, culminating in the fading away of the mind in senility and death. Here the book of life closes. Nothing survives but Mr. Bennett's book".[2] The reality of these novels of Bennett is unequaled for sheer observation and revelation of character.

He is an Englishman who has been to school in France. Thus we find in him an apostle of the gospel of work and the champion of meditation; the traditionalist insisting on form and convention as the bases of society, and the modernist breaking a lance for his contemporaries; the romanticist with his determination to celebrate the extraordinary in the ordinary, and the realist with his adherence to the usual.

1. Bennett: The Old Wives' Tale p. 202

2. Cross, Wilbur: Arnold Bennett of the Five Towns

This realist, Arnold Bennett, will probably survive in literary history as the painter of a few small towns, supreme in his delineation of the virtues of narrow lives characteristic of the community where he was born.

IV

Summary

A. Defoe

Probably no man ever understood better than Defoe how to use a plain, racy English style of language. His writings show his great logical mind. Under the direction of his tutors, he went through a complete course of theology, in which he acquired a proficiency that enabled him to cope with the writers of that argumentative age. His education in the Nonconformist school and his home training made a thorough moralist of Defoe. Whether he wrote of the low-life character Moll or of Roxana, the consort of nobles, wickedness met with earthly retribution and true repentance was the only salvation for the sinner.

Defoe had sufficient knowledge of mathematics for the acquirement of astronomy; and as to geography, he appears to have been acquainted with every known spot of the earth, its physical character, natural and artificial productions, and the whole trade and commerce of the world. Defoe's natural bent for business and

his ventures in that field found expression in his novels.

History, ancient and modern, ecclesiastical and civil, appears to have been at his fingers' ends. This back-ground was important in his political career, which in turn gave Defoe invaluable experience in clear, simple, and concise writing. A man who possessed a fine understanding of the constitution of his country, Defoe was one of the period's most successful writers of political pamphlets.

He was far in advance of his time in many branches of political and social science. He recommended schools for the education of women. His novels demonstrate the evils to which homeless children are subjected. In Colonel Jacque Defoe painted the training of children to a life of crime, and what is more remarkable he expounded a humanitarian theory on the treatment of slaves. Jacque, the hero, proved to be successful in the handling of the slaves on a Virginia plantation. He attributed his success to the fact that love is a stronger chain than fear, an unusual point of view in a slave overseer of the time. In truth Defoe acquired a range of learning that is rarely equaled.

Defoe lived in a period when piracy flourished on the high seas and tales of adventure were common.

With his naturally inquisitive mind he not only made use of the great body of literature on travels and voyages, but he also abstracted information from all social contacts. From conversation with the seafarer in the tavern or the criminal in prison Defoe drew first-hand material for his narratives. Although he was not a seaman or a criminal of vicious habits, Defoe's genius paints a convincing picture of sea and low-life adventures.

Maynadier says that the secret of Defoe's realism lies in his "unbounded imagination for fact",[1] and in his mastery of handling incident and unnecessary detail. The use of incident in his novels fascinates the reader and convinces him of the truth of the story. Time and place are constantly kept in the foreground to give the semblance of truth. The narratives of Defoe are novels of incident, the result of picaresque influence. Although Defoe's novels of incident are lacking in plot and character development, their vital realism is undeniable.

The simplicity of Defoe's language enabled him to reach all classes of society. By explanation of unfamiliar terms he insures clear exposition. Although

1. Maynadier: Defoe's Works Introduction

his language is simple and homely, it shows variety and imagination. It may be said that Defoe's simplicity of language and material expresses a true realistic style, natural, clear, and universal.

It matters not whether Defoe portrays the English sailor Crusoe or Roxana, the courtesan of the upper classes, for his subjects are without exception true-to-life. The tendencies of his characters to travel, to learn by experience, and to find their own happiness by reason are essentially human. Although he wrote accurately of life, his works are colored with his moralizing, for the artist is blended with the moralist in Defoe.

B. Bennett

The Old Wives' Tale and The Clayhanger Trilogy demonstrate the remarkable powers of Arnold Bennett's observation. These books show an unusual mastery of detail and, particularly in The Old Wives' Tale, solidity of construction. The sensitive and sympathetic mind of the author enabled him to see human nature so completely that his novels seem to be a transcript of life without beginning, middle, or end.

Bennett during the last decade of the nineteenth century was among the group of young radicals who took as

their ideals the French writers of 'naturalism', the Goncourt brothers, Flaubert, and de Maupassant. The rule of life was frustration of hopes and ambitions, a philosophy that arose from the positivism of Comte and Taine. The French critics and writers undoubtedly influenced Bennett, for frustration was the theme of Bennett's first novel, A Man from the North. It was the example of de Maupassant's Une Vie that suggested The Old Wives' Tale.

As one might have expected from a native of the Five Towns, Arnold Bennett was a practical, business-like person. He carried a looseleaf notebook to hold any stray material for his writings. His personal life was planned in an efficient manner to insure a remarkable production of work. In his novels Bennett pictures money and sex as the two most vital forces of middle-class industrial life. That religion is not a positive element in the Five Towns is apparent from Bennett's picture of the exponents of Methodism. The business instinct is foremost in the lives of the people in this industrial section.

Bennett places emphasis on domestic life. As a journalist in charge of a woman's magazine, he gained a rare insight into the virtues and shortcomings of

women. He portrays the place and power of women in home and the problems of family relationships. This author shows a fine appreciation of the secrets of the human heart. Through the use of detail Bennett succeeds in revealing the truth about life, that which is apparently a drab existence is full of color and interest to the individual who lives it.

C. Conclusion

While this thesis was not undertaken as a comparison of Defoe and Bennett, there are some common and some contrasting characteristics in their novels.. Both of these authors had unusual powers of observation and journalistic training which may account for their clear, natural exposition and their mastery of detail. However, Defoe's realism is in the stories of picaresque adventurers who range far from their homes, while Bennett realistically portrays the life of the townsman's narrow world. Defoe uses detail to give circumstantiality and seeming authenticity to his adventures, while Bennett adapts detail to the portrayal of the completeness of every-day life. Defoe deals with action, Bennett with characterization.

Both authors depict the life of the middle class

who recognize money as the most potent force in their sphere. This is the natural viewpoint of men who have lived in close touch with tradesmen and themselves possess aptitudes for business. Bennett does not picture religion as a deep and vital factor in the Five Towns, whereas Defoe constantly holds up religion as the only means to happiness and affluence.

Daniel Defoe who wrote so fascinatingly of adventurous life and salvation through religion demands our praise as an early master of realism, while Arnold Bennett by his faithful portrayal of life as it is to the townsman has placed himself among the foremost of the contemporary realists.

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